

Claims 5-27 are pending. Claims 5-13, 15-23 and 25-27 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. Sec. 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Barry et al.* (U.S. Pat No. 5,596,416) in view of *Matias* (U.S. Pat. No. 5,528,374). Claims 14 and 24 are objected to and the Applicants appreciate they would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Claims 5-13, 15-23 and 25-27 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Barry et al* in view of *Matias*. This rejection is respectfully traversed with respect to the amended claims.

Applicants' present invention, as defined by the amended claims, is directed toward a system that is operable to utilize a plurality of print engines with a job distributed thereamong. However, it is noted that this job is distributed after ripping in a single RIP engine *and* in accordance with print job parameters that are associated with the rasterized data. Therefore, the data, after rasterization, has information associated therewith that is utilized to determine the distribution operation.

The *Barry et al* reference does not distribute pages *after* ripping. In the *Barry et al.* reference the RIP is performed in each print engine module *after* the job is distributed among the plurality of print engine modules. See, e.g., FIG. 5. Therefore, this reference does not anticipate Claim 5 or Claim 18, the independent claims of the present invention. The Examiner correctly noted in the *Final Office Action* that "Barry differs from claims 5, 7 and 18 in that he does not disclose that the job distributor has a single RIP engine (processor)." (See the DETAILED ACTION, page 3, lines 3 and 4). Further, to complete the 103(a) rejection it is asserted that "Matias discloses a printing apparatus in which a single RIP (16) processes jobs for plural print engines (figure 3)." This statement about *Matias* is correct as far as it goes, but it does not recite *all* of the features of the job distributor in the Applicants' invention recited in independent Claim 5 or in independent Claim 18 that must be combined with *Barry et al.* in order for such an argument to succeed.

RESPONSE TO ADVISORY ACTION

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In Applicants' Claim 5 as amended, "a job distributor having a single RIP engine for receiving said multiple page documents and generating therefrom rasterized page data *and providing said rasterized page data organized for parallel distribution to said inputs of selected different ones of said plurality of physical print engines according to print job parameters associated with said rasterized data.*" (Emphasis added.)

In the above passage from Applicants' Claim 5, the text in italics is not disclosed in *Matias*, as it must be in order to sustain the Examiner's 103(a) rejection.

Further, neither *Barry et al* nor *Matias* describe any type of distribution based upon print job parameters that are associated with the rasterized data after the ripping operation. The *Barry et al* reference distributes the original job in accordance with parameters associated with *the job*, rather than that associated with the rasterized image as in the present invention. Moreover, the *Matias* reference transmits the "page information and marking engine control" information *separately* from the print data along a "job control communications link 58." See *Matias*, col. 4, lines 39-43. Therefore, Applicants believe that neither *Barry et al* nor *Matias*, taken singularly or in combination, render Applicants' present invention or concept obvious or unpatentable. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request the withdrawal of 35 U.S.C. §103(a) restriction with respects to Claims 5-13, 15-23 and 25-27.

Applicants note with appreciation the Examiner's indication that claims 14 and 24 would be allowable if rewritten to include the limitations of the base claims. Now, Applicants believe that, in view of the above arguments, that the amended claims distinguish over the *Barry et al.* and *Matias* references.

Applicants have now made an earnest attempt in order to place this case in condition for allowance. For the reasons stated above, Applicants respectfully request full allowance of the claims

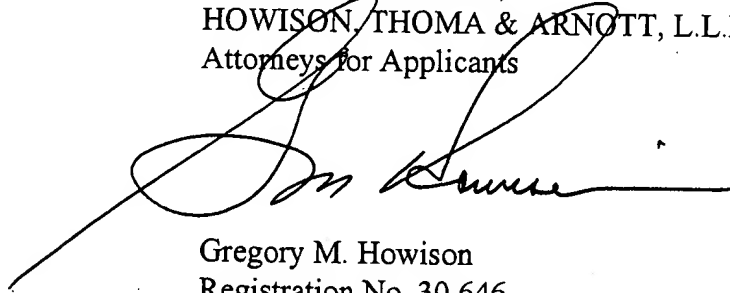
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as amended. Please charge any additional fees or deficiencies in fees or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 20-0780/TRSY-23,677 of HOWISON, THOMA & ARNOTT, L.L.P.

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